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New York

President:	Mrs. Haley	(United States of America)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Adom
	Equatorial Guinea	Mrs. Meye Colifa
	Ethiopia	Mr. Amde
	France	Mrs. Guey[illegible]
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2018/800)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

Report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2018/800)

The President: In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Michael Keating, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia; Mr. Francisco Caetano José Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia; and Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

Mr. Madeira is joining this meeting via video tele-conference from Mogadishu.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2018/809, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on Somalia.

I now welcome and give the floor to Mr. Keating.

Mr. Keating: My tour of duty comes to an end next week. On the day that I arrived in Mogadishu in January 2016, I was taken straight to the President's office to discuss a threat by federal member states to suspend cooperation with the central Government. When I left Mogadishu two days ago, the country faced a similar situation.

The structural problems that shape Somali politics and security have not changed, but that should not obscure some remarkable achievements in the past three years. There was a peaceful transition of presidential power with a result that was accepted as legitimate. A new Upper House, representing the federal states, came into being. The percentage of women Members of Parliament went up from 14 to 24 per cent, higher than both the African and the global average. A famine was averted in 2017 thanks to national mobilization, better preparedness and the generosity and speed of donors in providing funding. That is a largely untold story that is a credit both to Somalis and to the United Nations.

The federal map is being filled in. One year ago, HirShabelle state was created. There have been successes in conflict prevention and resolution. I just crossed lines and went shopping in Galkayo, a town that was until recently very insecure and bitterly divided. Other conflicts, such as between Puntland and Somaliland, have been prevented through intense diplomatic activity by the United Nations, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and others.

A framework for addressing chronic insecurity is in place: the national security architecture and the comprehensive approach to security.

The plan for the transition of lead security responsibility from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to Somali forces is being implemented. Somali forces just took over Mogadishu's iconic stadium and adjacent areas.

There is a Government in place with a compelling reform agenda, anchored in the strong partnership between President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo and Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khayre. Its primary objective is to make the country more creditworthy and accountable as a step towards regaining full sovereignty, reducing dependency and attracting both public and private investment.

Benchmarks set by the International Monetary Fund are being met, domestic revenues are increasing, public financial management is improving, business confidence is growing and the prospect of arrears clearance and debt relief is closer.

Legislative and institutional frameworks are being developed for the 2020 elections. Real progress is being made to review the Constitution. Federal states have been more engaged on a range of issues, and the work Federalization Negotiation Technical Committee has energized the Government's agenda. A national reconciliation framework is being developed with a view to all players in Somali society playing a part in addressing grievances and resolving conflicts.

Somalis can draw strength from those positive changes. However, no one should delude themselves about the challenges ahead, many of them structural.

Somalis continue to experience profound insecurity, high and costly levels of violence, ruthless attacks by

Al-Shabaab, limited access to justice and basic services, an absence of local governance, chronic poverty and a lack of income and jobs.

The country is vulnerable to climate shocks. There are 2.6 million internally displaced persons. It is one of the most disadvantageous places in the world for women, and the educational, work and life opportunities for young people remain heartbreakingly limited.

Abuse and the deprivation of human rights is common, including sexual violence, harmful traditional practices, limited freedom of expression and arbitrary arrests and detentions, including of children. A national human rights commission has yet to be established.

Disputes over borders, resources and revenues, power-sharing and grievances between clans and interest groups have the potential to turn violent and result in further human misery and displacement.

The 4.5 power-sharing convention that accommodates the interests of powerful clans at the expense of weaker ones and of minorities has allowed progress, but is a source of exploitable grievances.

The rule of law is weak. A justice and corrections model is close to being agreed, but capacity remains very limited. The Government lacks the means to ensure that judgements are implemented; too often, people turn to Al-Shabaab instead.

Corruption is systemic, used to gain and retain power. It penalizes the poor, the majority. Untraceable money changing hands continues to be a defining feature of Somali politics.

Tackling corruption also requires structural change — building and funding independent justice institutions, appointing well-trained and competent staff in the civil service.

Somalis are proud of their clan lineage, but the country cannot afford to let clan identity be the only basis for determining appointments. Young people in particular deserve institutions that deliver services.

The Government is fully aware of those challenges. The issue is whether it will be able to tackle them, and whether the international community will be able to provide coherent, adequate and timely support to help it do so. There are many risks. Four stand out.

First is the risk that Al-Shabaab and other extremists will derail progress. Despite the success of AMISOM and Somali security forces in containing Al-Shabaab, it remains resilient. It uses targeted assassinations, improvised explosive devices and the extortion both of communities and businesses, including in Mogadishu and other towns. Managing and mitigating that risk requires systematic degradation of Al-Shabaab, as well as increasing the legitimacy and capacity of the Government. One without the other will not work.

Accelerated implementation of the national security architecture and investment in the comprehensive approach to security are essential. Those can facilitate more coherent approaches by international partners, but success depends primarily upon the implementation of agreements among Somali leaders on security roles and responsibilities throughout the country.

Second is the risk that political differences will bring progress, the passage of key legislation and the implementation of the Government's reform-and-security agenda to a grinding halt. The deficit of trust between the central Government and federal member states and the recent decision by the latter to suspend cooperation are very worrisome. The failure to restore trust and cooperation sends a negative signal to both Somalis and those international partners trying to make a case to sceptical capitals that Somali is ready for additional financial and security support. Federal states should use the upcoming meeting of the National Security Council, to be convened by the President, as an opportunity for constructive engagement. Building upon progress to date, there is scope for more investment in the capacity of federal states and more outreach and communication from the centre. Securing the buy-in of key constituencies to the national agenda — not just the federal states, but also parliamentarians, clan power brokers, the business community, including the diaspora, and traditional elders — is becoming tougher and more expensive as state and national elections approach, but it is essential.

Mitigating that risk requires a twin-track approach. Fundamental issues, including how power should be shared, allocated and separated, the nature of the federal state and the respective powers of Federal and state Governments, should be addressed through the constitutional review. Young people, women and minorities need to be consulted. Strong and differing views about federalism are legitimate, but if the political culture is to change, those need to be resolved through dialogue, not unilateral actions. More immediately, the greatest challenge is to reach political agreements

that enable forward momentum without prejudicing the outcome of the constitutional review. Those include the electoral law, the integration of security forces and resource- and revenue-sharing agreements. In that context, trust is the key ingredient, although it is difficult given the fact that politicians suspect, or assume, that their opponents' principal preoccupation is to remove or replace them. The concept of patriotic opposition is weak, and the rules of the political game are blurred and blunt. Motions of no-confidence and impeachment and elections are abused and used for financial and political gain. They need to be revamped. Politicians' role should be to get things done, rather than promote clan or personal interests. That will take time and will happen only if agreements and processes are seen as legitimate and the result of constructive engagement. Trust requires respect for due process, the commitment to non-violence and the willingness to engage and make compromises for the broader good. That was my parting message to Somali leaders.

The third risk, notwithstanding Council unity, is fragmentation in the international community. There are a number of dimensions to that. The Government's security, political and economic reform agenda will be far more successful if partners work with one another, based on agreed national plans and capable management systems. In some areas that is working, and the results have been impressive, including humanitarian and electoral support and economic and financial reforms. Strong partnerships are being brokered by the United Nations and international financial institutions. Much high-level budget support is in the pipeline, including from the European Union and Norway, but in other areas, namely, the security area, more bilateral approaches prevail, thereby complicating the chances of success.

Another area in which fragmentation must be resisted is the basis upon which AMISOM will remain in the country. AMISOM deserves predictable funding and a clear horizon for its drawdown, based on reconfiguration around progress in degrading Al-Shabaab and on evident Somali capacity to assume security responsibilities. A premature departure of AMISOM could be disastrous, but in order to be sustained, support for AMISOM, as well as support for Somali security institutions, requires success in improving the population's security. Somalis have taken ownership of a conditions-based transition, and AMISOM can help drive its success. The role played by the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) will need to evolve as transition advances. The current UNSOS review will shed light on that.

A further test of international unity relates to Somalia's vulnerability to partners' rivalries, including in the Gulf. The atmosphere created by the resurgence of diplomatic activity in the Horn of Africa and the rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea may, I hope, prove contagious. Beneficial knock-on effects could include containment or a swifter resolution of conflicts among Somalis, including talks between Hargeisa and Mogadishu, which need to resume, and finding a respectful basis upon which Somalia can benefit from historic links and support with all its partners.

A fourth risk is that the population will once again face the prospect of a humanitarian catastrophe. Unfortunately, the risk of that happening is high, and millions are already living on the edge of a dignified existence. Future crises will result from the combination of climate-related shocks, armed conflict provoked by Al-Shabaab and unresolved grievances, competition over natural resources and the systemic marginalization of certain groups. The objective should be to reduce human vulnerability by creating jobs, investing in urbanization, water management and access to clean power, and adding value to the country's enormous economic potential, whether in livestock, fisheries, agriculture or information technology.

The future of Somalia is in the hands of the Somalis. The Government recognizes that, and I pay tribute to its determination to reassert Somalia's sovereignty. Political will alone, however, is not enough. Practical capacities are essential, as is success in fostering truly inclusive politics, which is far from easy in a political economy scarred by 30 years of violent conflict, with spoilers who benefit from insecurity. Success depends upon political, business, traditional and other leaders working together for the common good, while leveraging the country's potential wealth to transform prospects for people — especially youth. Cynicism concerning the likelihood of that ever happening and of Somalis being able to find a basis upon which to resolve their problems has been punctured in the past few years. There is now a sense of the possible, not of just the impossible. The more that political leaders show unity, the greater the opportunity, and the responsibility, of international partners to invest in all parts of the country and its leadership.

In conclusion, I should like to thank the Council for its continued support for Somalia, the United Nations and me and my team. It has been a privilege to work with international partners and, above all, with the leaders and people of Somalia.

The President: I thank Mr. Keating for his briefing, and, on behalf of the entire Council, I thank him for his service.

I now give the floor to Mr. Madeira.

Mr. Madeira: I thank you, Madam President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation in Somalia. It is a great honour for me to do so once again.

Somalia is on its way to taking full ownership of its future. Despite many daunting challenges, Somalia is on an upward trajectory, and tangible progress can be seen in a number of critical areas. The country's journey towards lasting peace and security remains achievable through the concerted efforts of its people, leadership and many international friends and partners, including the strong partnership of the African Union and that of the United Nations. The momentum created by encouraging developments in the region, where leaders of the Horn of Africa have become more aware of the urgency of achieving peace and stability around them and are taking deliberate initiatives to enhance and captitalize on the factors that are common to their peoples and unite their countries, is creating new opportunities for reconciliation, stability, regional cooperation and economic integration. That momentum must be maintained by Somalia and its people, who should remain steadfast on the path on which they have embarked under their Government, which has been characterized by reconciliation among Somalis, economic growth and prosperity without corruption, security and stability through respect for human rights, inclusive politics, power- and resource-sharing and equitable land distribution. In that connection, the African Union congratulates the Federal Government of Somalia for placing inclusive politics at the core of its national reform agenda towards federalization and the constitutional review, as expressed through the political road map on inclusive politics.

We welcome the decisions taken at the National Security Council meetings on resource-sharing, security force integration and the transition plan. We view with satisfaction and salute the commitment of the Federal Government of Somalia to accelerating the taking of the political decisions needed to effectively tackle and address all remaining issues delaying the finalization of the constitutional review process, including formalizing the status of the federal member states under the National Security Council, resource- and power-sharing between the Federal Government of Somalia and federal member states, fiscal federalism, the allocation of responsibilities in the security and justice sectors, the rule of law, the system of political representation and the implementation of an agreed, transparent and credible justice model. The creation of the Federalization Negotiation Technical Committee, tasked to drive forward negotiations on the fundamental pillars for long-term stability, including election model resource-sharing and allocation of powers to support political agreements at the leadership level, is a landmark step towards lasting peace in the country.

President Farmajo and his Government, as well as the leaders of Somalia at both the national and federal member state levels, have charted the way to realizing Somalia's constitutionally guaranteed one person-one vote election, as stipulated in the Somali provisional Constitution. We need to continue to encourage and support the leadership as it strives to implement and bring clarity to all other outstanding issues in this regard, such as the passage of the electoral law, the continued registration of political parties, the finalization of related constitutional amendments, amendment of the law on political parties, protective inclusivity, particularly in terms of ensuring the equal representation of women, as well as internally displaced persons, young people, minorities and disadvantaged groups, in decision-making.

Tremendous progress has been made towards achieving debt relief, which will offer Somalia the opportunity to have access to international concessional financing and increase financial resources. We strongly applaud these efforts and congratulate the Somalis on that outstanding achievement.

Progress in Somalia has never been easy and cannot be taken for granted. The Government is operating in an unstable environment, using very fragile tools and managing extremely weak institutions. Peace dividends accumulated as a result of the sustained efforts of the Somalis and their partners are constantly threatened and hampered by mistrust, clan dynamics, extremist ideological narratives, divisive politics, insurgency, unregulated competition for power and resources, violent extremism and vicious Al-Shabaab activity.

The current political crisis in Somalia is putting unusual pressure on the cohesion of the Federal Government and federal member states. I believe in the wisdom and the capacity of the Somali leadership to overcome this new challenge through continued focus and unity of purpose, protracted dialogue, a spirit of partnership, shared interests and mutual accommodation. We should, however, remain supportive of such efforts and be ready to intervene in case of need and provide sustained dependable, timely, coherent and proactive support to the parties.

Turning to the security situation, there is a backdrop of continued violence and local clan conflicts that remains a real concern. Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State continue to maintain an active presence across Somalia and to conduct deadly attacks. Most recently, there has been Al-Shabaab's shift in operations, with a renewed focus on Mogadishu. This shift creates real danger. The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) remains ready to partner with the Somali national security forces, which have taken over from the Mogadishu stabilization force. Similarly, beyond Mogadishu, Al-Shabaab continues to resort to using improvised explosive devices (IEDs), including vehicle-borne and remote-controlled vehicle-borne IEDs, and ambushes, particularly along the main supply routes. The impact of Al-Shabaab's freedom of movement continues constrain AMISOM troops, Somali national forces and civilians, as well as humanitarian actors.

Addressing the threat of Al-Shabaab will ultimately require the completion of the national security architecture and progress on the comprehensive approach to security. In this regard, AMISOM will continue to support these frameworks and the necessary security reforms required by the Federal Government.

As Somalia navigates its way through a learning curve, we must not lose sight of the real progress made by the Federal Government and, I should add, within a short period of time. Over recent months, we have seen genuine attempts at defence reform by the Federal Government. This has seen significant progress on biometric registration, payroll reform and the recent operational readiness assessment of the regional forces conducted by AMISOM's police component.

In addition, last month, we witnessed substantial changes in the security establishment and a genuine attempt to improve gender parity within its senior ranks with the appointment of Brigadier General Zakia Hussein Ahmed as Somalia's first female Deputy Police Commissioner. AMISOM welcomes these important changes and looks forward to working closely with the new security chiefs in securing Mogadishu and improving security across Somalia.

As Council members are fully aware, such progress will be critical in transforming the landmark national security rchitecture agreement of 2017 from design to implementation. In this connection, AMISOM welcomes the outcomes of the National Security Council meetings that took place in Baidoa in June, calling for the completion of the national security architecture. Completing the national security architecture will ensure that the progress on transition made to date by the Federal Government and federal member states, together with AMISOM, is sustained. The rationale for the transition is to design a framework for building Somali operational and institutional capacity for its forces as well as to meet the needs of Somali citizens, especially in the areas of justice, responsible local governance, freedom of movement and service provision.

Today, I can report that progress is being made on the implementation of the transition plan, but before that I wish to pay tribute to the efforts of the Federal Government in leading the transition implementation team. The implementation team continues to meet and plan regularly and has fostered a close partnership between AMISOM, planners and its Somali National Army counterparts. This close partnership and joint planning is now the basis of AMISOM's mentorship of the Somali security forces and, within the coming weeks, planning will soon be devolved to the regional security offices as part of the Federal Government's next step on transition. This also represents a major step in transition planning, as federal member states will receive urgently needed support for their regional support offices.

Regarding the implementation of the pilot phase, as announced in July at the Brussels Somalia Partnership Forum by His Excellency Ambassador Smaïl Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, AMISOM would hand over the Mogadishu stadium. It is with great pride that I wish to inform the Council that AMISOM has now relocated from Mogadishu stadium. A formal handover of the premises will be completed at a date and in accordance with modalities mutually agreed with the federal Government of Somalia and all stakeholders once the

United Nations Support Office in Somalia concludes the environmental clean up of the stadium.

As for the remaining pilot locations, securing the Mogadishu-Baidoa main supply route has seen major progress. More needs to be done, particularly on ensuring that the commitments made during the past two National Security Council meetings in Mogadishu and Baidoa are implemented not only by the Federal Government, but also by the federal member states. More important is the financial support required from Somalia's international partners so as to ensure that we can mitigate potential threats to the transition and not reverse the gains made by AMISOM.

The next six months will be crucial for the African Union and AMISOM as we focus on the critical tasks ahead. Following the fourth joint review of AMISOM, the AU Peace and Security Council renewed AMISOM's mandate at its 782nd ministerial meeting, as reflected in its 27 June communiqué, which is now complemented by Council resolution 2431 (2018).

The implications of both mandates are far-reaching. The transformation of AMISOM's operations is taking place across Somalia as we plan our eventual exit from the country. In adjusting to the new strategic and operational realities, AMISOM is now in its final phase of deploying its civilian component across its sectors. Their role will be to support AMISOM military and police in implementing the transition plan, in addition to focusing on stabilization, reconciliation and human rights efforts. In doing so, I welcome the commitment of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia to working alongside AMISOM's soon-to-be-deployed civilians across the federal member states.

Similarly, as required by resolution 2431 (2018), AMISOM has recently concluded a comprehensive internal review of its capabilities. I am pleased to report that the review was conducted in full transparency, highlighting AMISOM's achievements within its capabilities and identifying gaps across its three components. The outcomes, including defining a model for AMISOM's reconfiguration, will set a baseline for the next AMISOM concept of operations. That will also provide enhanced support to the implementation of the transition.

The President: I thank Mr. Madeira for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka: Let me start by thanking you, Madam President, for this opportunity to brief the Council on my recent visit to Somalia.

Like previous speakers, I believe that Somalia has a once-in-a-generation opportunity for both peace and gender equality. Many of the Somalis I spoke to are risking their lives to seize this opportunity. One of the most important developments in Somalia is the representation of women in public office, which is increasing and has been helped by special measures. Women's representation jumped from 14 to almost 25 per cent in the latest parliamentary elections, bringing important voices to Somali politics and bringing to the centre the fight to end child marriage, to end female genital mutilation and to change the laws that discriminate against women.

The participation of women in Somalia would increase even faster if it were not left to the clan elders, who tend to entrench the inequalities that the laws are fighting against. Many more leaders are needed to embrace gender equality and support women in order to fast-track the critical changes.

In Baidoa, the interim capital of South West state, where the Governor has been a stellar supporter of women, I spoke with 31 female legislators in the State Assembly, which has the highest number of women legislators in Somalia. I saw the need for support that the women called for. I was able to hear their pain and their desire to change the future of their children and their communities. These women and the people of Somalia desperately need the continued support of the international community so that their courageous efforts will not be in vain.

I also saw important developments, as evidenced by the constitutional review and the preparations for the 2020-2021 elections, starting with a legally binding 30 per cent quota for women. The Government of Somaliland agreed in June to reserve 20 per cent of seats for women in upcoming parliamentary and local council elections. It is my strong belief that the Security Council can and must stand with the Federal and state Governments in their efforts to advance gender equality, often against the objections of the more powerful clan-based authorities. The voices of the women of Somalia and other minorities must be heard. They must be represented at the tables where decisions are being taken because Somalia remains one of the

countries with some of the worst conditions for women and girls.

Earlier this year, Somaliland followed Puntland in adopting a law criminalizing rape, forced marriage, trafficking for sexual slavery and sexual harassment. Even advocates were taken by surprise when the bill got 35 of 50 votes in the House of Elders. The Federal Government finally agreed on a sexual offences bill, which only needs parliamentary approval. After a 10-year old girl bled to death, the Government announced the first-ever prosecution of female genital mutilation, and there is a draft bill to criminalize this practice. These are encouraging developments.

Additionally, in the past few years we have seen advances, including the first forensic laboratory with capacity to test DNA in rape cases, and the Chief of the Somali National Army issuing a command order affirming zero tolerance for sexual violence and a traditional dispute-resolution policy to encourage families to take sexual violence complaints to courts rather than clan-based informal mechanisms. A woman has been appointed Chairperson of the National Independent Electoral Commission. Together with the African Union and the women of Somalia, we will soon launch the Somali chapter of the African Women Leaders Network. That will support the building of women's movement among the many women in Somalia who are hungry for change.

These landmark achievements need the Council's support and sustained attention because the progress that Somalis are making is not irreversible. These laws are often ignored. Female parliamentarians are often marginalized at the whim of clan elders. Al-Shabaab courts are still killing women by burying them neck-deep and pelting them with stones. In customary courts, rapists often simply compensate the victim's family or marry her. Impunity for sexual violence is still rampant, but I hope that the Security Council will investigate the impact on women of current efforts to counter violent extremism with a view to identifying the best ways to support women.

There are three centres to rehabilitate men who disengage from Al-Shabaab, but none for women. Women can play a vital role in motivating the voluntary disengagement of Al-Shabaab members, but that work is often an afterthought and lacks resources. With greater support, women can make significant progress in that area, and we stand ready to support them. Somalia is also an important test case for the Secretary-General's gender parity goals, because the lack of gender balance in the United Nations has been noticed by our Somali partners.

I expect Council members will follow up on the implementation of the mandates they gave to the African Union Mission in Somalia and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia earlier this year, which include many references to gender equality, and will support women's participation, not just in elections or electoral reforms but also in efforts to advance national and local reconciliation, prevent violent extremism and reform the security sector.

Just as I have heard many times in the Council that peace cannot be achieved by military means alone, I know that Somalia will not have long-lasting peace and deep reconciliation without the far-reaching contribution, involvement and recognition of women. We should support and help women to change the deep structures that continue to reinforce inequality and insecurity. That can happen when women are fully involved.

Women's organizations in Somalia are organized, dedicated and comprised of activists, advocates, entrepreneurs, professionals and patriots, and they pay the ultimate price. Let us think about them as we look at the way in which we are supporting the changes to enhance security in Somalia. In the many challenges that lie ahead, women will face them and make a difference. In Somalia, the glass is half full. Let us help to fill the other half. I thank the Council again for the support given to UN-Women.

The President: I thank Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka for her briefing.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Somalia to participate in this meeting.

I now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make statements.

Mr. Allen (United Kingdom): I thank all three of our briefers for their very informative briefings today. If I may, I would like to particularly thank Michael Keating for his work and commitment during this historic period in Somalia's State-building process and for his resilience while holding this challenging and dynamic portfolio. He has been an exemplary Special

Representative of the Secretary-General, and I think the whole Security Council wishes him well in his future.

As Mr. Keating set out in the nearly three years he has represented the Secretary-General, there has been real progress to advance peace, stability and State-building in Somalia. But there have also been and remain significant challenges, and we have seen both in recent months. I think the biggest single positive — if we start with the positives — must surely be in the overall regional dynamic. It has been exciting and inspirational to see the rapprochement brought about in the Horn of Africa, in particular, led by Ethiopia and Eritrea.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome to the Council the new Ambassador of Ethiopia and to also pay tribute to his predecessor, who was such an influential member of the Council. I have known Mr. Alemu for a decade; I have learned so much from him, and I count him as a friend. That is why I wanted to welcome the new Ambassador and thank his predecessor for all he did for us here and for Africa in the Council.

In Somalia, I think that the other positives we have seen are the agreement in principle on an electoral model and resource-sharing signed in June, and we welcome and need to see further progress to take those forward. It has been extremely encouraging to see the strong progress on economic recovery, including efforts to tackle corruption, improve public financial management and commitments to ambitious reforms under the recently agreed on third International Monetary Fund programme. We commend those efforts and their results. I agree very much with Mr. Keating on the economic potential of Somalia, which of course requires a political commitment and courage if we are to get there.

We also warmly welcome the much-needed improvement in the humanitarian situation following both the strong humanitarian response and the better than average rainfall. Recovery remains fragile. We must not be complacent. The situation is still concerning, with 2.6 million internally displaced persons in urgent need of assistance.

Unfortunately, however, as our briefers set out, significant challenges remain. The current political difficulties between the Federal Government and the federal member states urgently need to be resolved. That is critical across all areas of State-building. A failure to resolve that challenge would seriously limit the opportunity for further progress. Cooperation between the parties is needed to meet the December time frame for passing the electoral law, and in particular to agree on the final outstanding issue of constituency size. It is needed to complete the constitutional review process and strengthen the federal system, and it is needed to take forward the vital work of security reform. We must therefore have cooperation.

I would like to now address security. Let me start with condemning in the strongest terms the attacks in Mogadishu on 2 and 10 September, and sending my deepest condolences to all those affected. Security reform is at a critical juncture. The implementation of the national security architecture, including the integration of and support for regional forces, is vital, and faster progress is needed. The national security architecture is the critical underpinning of a successful transition to Somalia-led security. We therefore welcome the development of the transition plan and we pay tribute to the ongoing commitment and sacrifice of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the troop-contributing countries in the fight against Al-Shabaab. I thought that was made very clear by Mr. Madeira in his briefing.

It is important that the transition plan be delivered in a managed and coordinated way, with close engagement from AMISOM, the federal member states and other partners. To support the practical requirements to transition, AMISOM needs to reconfigure accordingly. We all, as international partners, must play our part by coordinating the assistance we give as part of a comprehensive approach to security structures. Mr. Keating again set out the importance of us coordinating together and ensuring that we do not end up in a situation where essentially we are accidentally funding a set of different and private armies. We must bring together one army, and we must ensure that the transition is sustainably financed. The United Kingdom announced in recent weeks an additional $9 million in funding for AMISOM. I expect that there will be a number of calls today around the table for predictable and sustainable funding for AMISOM, and I urge all those who make those calls to ensure that they also make similar contributions.

May I welcome Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka to the Security Council table, and I hope to see her even more often. I would just like to very much welcome her briefing. The rise to 73 of the number of women elected as Members of Parliament in 2016 was a significant change and

really worthy of commendation. The country must build on that to support and strengthen the role of women as decision-makers and in leadership roles by strengthening the position of women, along with young people, people with disabilities, displaced people and minority groups, in the upcoming electoral law and constitutional review. I agree wholeheartedly with Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka that sustainable development and a sustainable peace require inclusion, and inclusion requires the particular inclusion of women. Legislation is important to strengthen the protection of women and girls, and ensure that perpetrators of abuses are held to account, including for sexual and gender-based violence. We look forward to further progress on the sexual offences bill and commend the progress made in Somaliland.

Overall, we believe that we are on the right side of the ledger in Somalia, but we cannot be complacent. We must continue to work, and we must work harder. I hope that the remarkable and exciting progress in the Horn of Africa also has an impact in Somalia. The key is dialogue and cooperation. All Somali leaders must work together and find ways to set aside short-term interests and gain in favour of longer-term stability, which will be of far-higher political, security and economic benefit to all in Somalia. That is the only way to ensure ongoing international support.

The President: Today is a special morning because we get to introduce our newest member of the Security Council, Ethiopian Ambassador Amde. We are so excited to have him. We welcome him to the Security Council family. He should get to know these faces because he will spend so much time with them that he will get tired looking at them. But we are certainly excited to have him, and we welcome him to the Council.

Mr. Amde (Ethiopia): May I underline how very pleased I am to be here today in the Security Council for the first time since my appointment as the new Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations. I look forward to working closely with each and every Council member and count on their support. I also thank you, Madam President, for your kind welcoming words. May I also note that it is particularly opportune that I am starting my work with a discussion on peace and security in Somalia. In Ethiopia it is a subject that is very close to our hearts.

Let me thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Michael Keating, and the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Mr. Madeira, for their briefings on the most recent developments in Somalia. As this is Mr. Keating's last briefing, let me also take this opportunity to express my Government's appreciation to him for his dedicated service in support of Somalia. We have enjoyed an excellent working relationship and cooperation with him over the past couple of years. We wish him all the very best in his future endeavours. We also look forward to working closely with his successor, Mr. Nicholas Haysom, who has already been active in the region. We are also grateful to the Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, for her briefing on her recent visit to Somalia, which focused on the role of women in peacebuilding.

Today's discussion takes place against the backdrop of significant and important developments in the Horn of Africa. As rightly highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/800), my Prime Minister undertook his first official visit to Mogadishu in June. The outcome demonstrated the strong commitment of both Ethiopia and Somalia to raise their relations to a new level. The subsequent visit of President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo to Asmara for the first time also heralded a new era between Somalia and Eritrea, with the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The trilateral summit among Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia that took place in Asmara early this month and the subsequent visit by the Foreign Ministers of the three countries to Djibouti also led the way for the opening of a new chapter in the relations between Djibouti and Eritrea.

Over the past few months, we have seen reconciliation and the start of the process of normalization between Ethiopia and Eritrea, Djibouti, the Sudan and Somalia. The restoration of peace between and among the members of our region is already providing for the possibility of extended economic integration and a broader political response. Yesterday, the South Sudanese parties finally signed the revitalized peace agreement for South Sudan at the Extraordinary Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in Addis Ababa. Of course, that is not the subject of our discussion today and we will take it up at the appropriate time, but it also underlines that the winds of change blowing across the Horn of Africa have rekindled a new sense of hope and optimism for regional peace and stability.

We welcomed the resolution of the political crisis a few months ago between the executive branch and the Federal Parliament in Somalia. It has brought about some positive developments in the overall political process in Somalia. Equally, we are very aware that the political situation today is being dominated by political tensions between the leadership of the Federal Government and the federal member states. We strongly agree with the Secretary-General on the urgent need to find solutions to such issues through discussion and dialogue. Fostering local, regional and national reconciliation is critical for State-building in Somalia. Similarly, the military standoff between Puntland and Somaliland forces has escalated in recent months. If the situation is not handled carefully, it has the potential to further complicate the security situation. In that context, we support the joint mediation efforts of IGAD and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia towards a negotiated resolution of the Somaliland and Puntland stalemate.

With regard to the security situation in Somalia, we remain very concerned about the series of attacks perpetrated by Al-Shabaab and elements of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in Mogadishu and other parts of the country. We strongly condemn their heinous attacks and continue to stand firmly in support of, and solidarity with, the people and the Government of Somalia in fighting the menace of terrorism in their country.

The swift implementation of the national security architecture and the Somalia transition plan will dictate the successful assumption of security responsibilities by Somali forces and provide protection to the people. At the same time, Somalia, of course, still needs sustained support from the international community in its efforts to achieve post-conflict recovery. In that regard, we welcome the outcome of the Somalia Partnership Forum held in Brussels in July and the strong commitment expressed by partners to supporting peace and prosperity in Somalia in a spirit of mutual accountability. However, we would strongly emphasize the need to translate commitments into concrete action and, in addition, ensure the necessary coherence among partners in providing support to Somalia.

The role of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), in close cooperation with the Somali national security forces, continues to be absolutely vital. We agree with the Secretary-General that more predictable support by the international community is important to implement AMISOM's mandate effectively and support Somalia on its path to peace and stability. There is no doubt that AMISOM needs increased force multipliers and other sustainable logistical and financial support. The AMISOM Military Operations Coordination Committee, which met in Nairobi last month, discussed a range of important issues and raised crucial points. They require our close attention.

The commitment of the Government of Somalia to progressively shoulder the lead role in providing security for its people and implement reforms is highly commendable. The Government has a realistic view of the conditions-based transition to ensure that the security gains, made with enormous sacrifices, are not reversed. It deserves our full support.

Finally, may I also emphasize that we hope, and have every expectation, that the high-level event on Somalia we will be co-hosting, along with our partners Somalia, the United Kingdom and Italy, during the high-level week, will contribute to keeping Somalia on the international agenda and help in mobilizing the necessary future support for its peacebuilding endeavours and its continued progress towards elections.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank Mr. Francisco Caetano Jose Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia, and Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN-Women, for their briefings. As my other colleagues have mentioned, we thank Mr. Michael Keating, not only for his briefing today, but also for his commitment, efforts and determination in supporting the well-being of Somalia and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. I also echo my colleagues in welcoming the new Permanent Representative of Ethiopia and take this opportunity to pay tribute to his predecessor, Ambassador Tekeda Alemu. The new representative has our full support.

Bolivia welcomes the efforts of the African Union, the United Nations and countries of the region to achieve peace and security in Somalia and overcome ongoing terrorist threats. We also underscore and commend the efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia to build and consolidate the political process of peace and reconciliation, in the framework of its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, with a focus on

defining its priorities for development, strengthening resilience and promoting socioeconomic transformation.

We would underscore also the initiatives taken by the Federal Government in the areas of peacebuilding, State-building, the strengthening of the rule of law, security-sector reform and other key objectives, which demonstrate its ongoing commitment to achieving political and social stability and, above all, to providing protection to the civilian population.

On security-sector reform, we note that it is vital that Somalia take ownership of the process, which must be built on a relationship of mutual trust and be consensus- and inclusivity-based with respect to both Federal Government and the federal states. To that end, we underscore the importance of the work of UNSOM in providing support to the Office of National Security, which we deem of paramount importance to building capacities in the area of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, as well as effective weapons and ammunition management, maritime security and strengthening the capacities of the country's police forces. In this respect, we would echo those who call for effective coordination of the various international stakeholders involved so as to ensure that all cooperation efforts in the security field are made in close coordination with the Federal Government of Somalia.

At the political level, we are concerned at the persistent tensions between certain federal states and the Federal Government, as political rivalries undermine Government oversight and hamper all the efforts of our Organization and the international community. In that regard, the political road map for Somalia shows significant progress that we are certain will be reflected in significant advantages of mutual benefit to both the Federal Government and federal states.

Bolivia fully supports the efforts of the international community to implement initiatives for mediation and preventive diplomacy that support the quest for a peaceful and sustainable solution to the conflict in Somalia. In this regard, it behoves us continually to highlight the work of the African Union Mission in Somalia and its personnel, some of whom have sacrificed their lives in the service of their mandate.

We fervently appeal to the parties to use peaceful mechanisms for resolving conflicts and disputes. We stress the need for the use of political means, including inclusive dialogue. Sustainable peace must be brought about through political tools if political solutions are to be found.

Dialogue means learning and requires reflection and the recognition not only of differences but also of areas of common ground. It also facilitates crisis recovery and can avert an escalation of violence insofar as the priorities and needs of all stakeholders are borne in mind.

On another tack, we are deeply concerned at the continual deterioration of the security situation. As several colleagues have already mentioned, the presence in Somalia of the Al-Shabaab terrorist group and a self-declared faction of the so-called Islamic State continues to highlight the imperative need to identify the means necessary to counter such threats.

Asymmetric attacks using car bombs, improvised explosive devices, including those controlled remotely, have caused the loss of hundreds of lives and significant material damage. The kidnapping of Government and international staff, the kidnapping, recruitment and indoctrination of children as fighters, as well as sexual violence against women and girls, particularly those who have suffered forced displacement, all are alarming.

We commend the coordination between UNSOM and the United Nations Development Programme in the implementation of support programmes for the protection of victims of sexual violence and in the establishment of preventive measures. The protection of women, boys and girls is and must be a priority.

To conclude, we are certain that the collective response, both to terrorist threats and to political instability in Somalia, must be robust and consistent. The international community must continue its strengthened cooperation for the full implementation of the national security architecture throughout Somali territory, so that in the near future the Somali security forces can take full responsibility for maintaining the security of their country and their people.

Mr. Adom (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): I would echo my colleagues who spoke before me in welcoming the presence here of the new Ambassador of Ethiopia. As the representative and coordinator of the group of African countries members of the Security Council by virtue of the principle of rotation, I welcome the fact that I will soon be able to count on his

wisdom — Ethiopian wisdom as reflected in the recent initiatives taken by the Ethiopian Prime Minister.

My delegation wishes also to thank Mr. Michael Keating, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) for his presentation of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2018/800). I would assure him that the Council deeply appreciates the tremendous work he has done in Somalia and wish him every success in all his future endeavours.

I wish also to thank Mr. Francisco Caetano Jose Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia, and Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, for their informative briefings. Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka has just returned from Somalia, where women constitute 25 per cent of the members of the National Assembly. That, I think, would make many States envious, and my country would indeed like to emulate Somalia in that achievement.

My delegation's statement will focus on the following points: the evolution of the political and security situation, the issue of human rights and the economic situation in Somalia.

On the political situation, Côte d'Ivoire notes with satisfaction the recent positive developments that have been noted in the Horn of Africa. In that regard, we welcome the initiatives taken by His Excellency Mr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, aimed at strengthening regional cooperation. My country also welcomes the commitment of Somalia's leaders to improve bilateral relations with Ethiopia and Eritrea.

My delegation would encourage the authorities of those countries to maintain this momentum and further strengthen their economic, diplomatic and security relations in order to ensure stability in the region.

However, we remain concerned by the tensions that have led the federal member states to suspend all cooperation with the Federal Government. While the agreements in principle reached by the National Security Council at its meeting in June on an electoral model and the sharing of revenues from natural resources gave rise to hope for an improvement in relations among the parties, the recent spike in tensions unfortunately demonstrates the fragility of the political situation in Somalia.

Côte d'Ivoire therefore urges the Somali authorities to overcome their differences. It calls on the leaders of the federal states to seize the opportunity of the National Security Council meeting to be convened by the Somali President on 18 September in order to restart discussions on the topics on which there is divergence. Those discussions could make it possible to create a climate of mutual trust and to work constructively to strengthen federalism and implement the agreed road map in the run-up to the elections scheduled for 2020 and 2021.

On the security track, my delegation remains deeply concerned at the fragility of the situation as described in the report of the Secretary-General. In addition to the continuing clan violence, my country is concerned by the renewed tension between Puntland and Somaliland, which has displaced about 15,000 people. We are convinced that a military option cannot resolve the disagreements between the two states. We therefore call on them to prioritize dialogue as a means of settling their differences, and we take this opportunity to commend the joint initiatives of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and UNSOM to find a peaceful solution to the conflict between Somaliland and Puntland.

My country also remains concerned about the activities of the terrorist groups Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in Somalia. Despite the intensification of counter-terrorist operations in the country, we must note that Al-Shabaab continues to possess operational capabilities to carry out large-scale attacks. As for the presence of the Islamic State in Somalia, it constitutes a major risk of destabilization for the region, or even the entire African continent, owing to its links with other terrorist groups, such as Al-Qaida and Boko Haram.

The precarious security situation in Somalia justifies the continued presence of troops of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in the country and should lead the international community to provide financial and logistical support on two tracks: first, to AMISOM, in order to enable it to effectively implement its mandate, and secondly, to the Somali Government, in order to support the country in its security sector reform process and enable it to effectively implement the transition plan,

which is aimed at facilitating a progressive transition from AMISOM to the country's security forces. In that regard, my country supports the appeal made by the Secretary-General to Member States to contribute to the financing of the trust funds for AMISOM and the Somali National Army. Furthermore, we call on the Somali authorities to redouble their efforts to achieve significant progress in power-sharing and the implementation of the security arrangements necessary for the proper implementation of the national transition plan.

My delegation notes with great concern the deterioration of the human rights situation in Somalia. We are seeing an increasing number of civilians killed, kidnappings, rapes and other sexual abuses, as well as the continued use of child soldiers by terrorist groups. Given that situation, Côte d'Ivoire wishes to remind the authorities of their responsibility to protect civilian populations, and all parties of their obligation to respect international law and human rights law. We are convinced that accountability is essential to the restoration of lasting peace and stability in Somalia. Therefore, my country urges the Somali authorities to identify the perpetrators of human rights violations and bring them to justice before the competent courts.

With regard to the economic situation, Côte d'Ivoire notes with satisfaction the progress made by the Somali Government in the implementation of the International Monetary Fund's reference programme. We reiterate our conviction that, in the light of our own experience, there can be no genuine solution to the crisis, or peacebuilding without efforts to rebuild the economy. Following the example of my country, which made that strategic choice, it is imperative that the current security responses be accompanied by a strategy based on combating poverty and youth unemployment in order to prevent them from succumbing to terrorist radicalization.

In conclusion, Côte d'Ivoire reiterates its appreciation to UNSOM, AMISOM, the United Nations Support Office in Somalia and all Somalia's partners for the multifaceted support they have provided to the people and the authorities of Somalia in under difficult circumstances.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We also would like to begin by welcoming our new colleague, the Ambassador of Ethiopia, and to express our support to him as he goes about his work. We are grateful for the convening of this meeting and the important briefings by Mr. Michael Keating, Mr. Francisco Caetano Jose Madeira and Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. We welcome the appointment of Nicholas Haysom as the new Special Representative for Somalia and thank Michael Keating for his valuable efforts to bring about peace and stability in Somalia during a very complex transition period.

Peru notes with concern the situation in Somalia. Inter-clan conflicts, violent extremism and the adverse effects of climate change have resulted in a serious humanitarian situation for millions of Somalis and in political instability that constrains the Federal Government's efforts to rebuild the country.

We vigorously condemn the terrorist attacks by Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. We stand in solidarity with the victims and encourage the Government not to allow those attacks aimed at underming peace to impede its efforts aimed at achieving sustainable peace in Somalia. We highly value efforts to build a federal State, including the initial agreements on the electoral model and the distribution of natural resources. We look forward to the review of the Constitution and preparations for the 2020-2021 general elections. We hope that, by resuming its activities this week, the Somali Parliament will be able to swiftly make progress on those issues.

We would also like to stress the importance of promoting the active participation of women and young people in the political life of the country and in the fight against violent extremism and terrorism. We welcome the fact that the draft electoral law provides for greater political representation for women. As Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka mentioned, the situation of women and girls who are victims of sexual violence needs to be addressed more effectively. We also welcome the participation of young Somalis in the International Youth Conference on the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism and Terrorism, which was held in Egypt in May.

We underscore the need to fully implement the national security architecture, which defines the roles and responsibilities of federal and regional forces, and the transition plan so that the Somali authorities assume responsibility for the security of the country. To that end, we note that coordination between the Federal Government and the federal states, as well as the support of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the United Nations Assistance Mission

in Somalia (UNSOM), the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) and international partners, is essential.

We are playing close attention to the most recent developments in the Horn of Africa subregion. We believe that the normalization of relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and now Somalia, should facilitate an increase in investment for the benefit of the development of the three countries and their citizens. Nevertheless, we believe it is essential that the international community increase its support for the implementation of the recovery and resilience framework for Somalia and the 2018 humanitarian response plan by providing the required financial resources.

I would like to conclude by highlighting the work done by AMISOM, UNSOM and UNSOS in support of the efforts of the authorities and the people of Somalia to achieve sustainable peace in spite of the remaining difficulties and challenges.

Mr. Skoog (Sweden): I thank Special Representative Keating, Special Representative of the African Union Commission Chairperson for Somalia Madeira and Executive-Director Mlambo-Ngcuka for their briefings this morning. Their remarks and the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/800) underline the significant political progress that has been made in Somalia and the region during the reporting period. The past few months have seen positive regional developments take place at an astonishing pace, mainly driven by the rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The tripartite summit in Eritrea and last week's high-level meeting in Djibouti among the Foreign Ministers of the region hold out the prospect of true change and a possibility to end the instability that has plagued the Horn of Africa for far too long.

I will take this opportunity to welcome, as others have done, our new colleague from Ethiopia, and repeat how important it is that, we, the Security Council recognize and acknowledge the historic significance of the decisions taken, not least by Ethiopia, and the positive momentum that those decisions have had for the entire region and how such leadership should serve as a model for so many other situations that are frequently on our agenda.

It is imperative, in that light, that Somali actors seize this opportunity for historic and significant change and continue the positive trajectory in addressing their own internal conflicts, not least the aggravated situation between Somaliland and Puntland. We strongly welcome the Federal Government's positive agenda and the high goals that it has set for Somalia.

It is important that a constructive and inclusive political dialogue continue at all levels, while taking on the challenging tasks that lie ahead, not least, with regard to the constitutional review, the strengthening of federalism and preparing for the 2020-2021 general elections, which will be the true peace accord for Somalia. The recent deterioration of relations between the federal member states and the Federal Government are of great concern in that regard. We urge all stakeholders to promptly meet in the National Security Council to address current grievances through mutually respectful dialogue. Functioning collaboration between the Government and the member states is a precondition for moving forward the Government's ambitious reform agenda and for Somalia's aspiration towards debt relief and advancing economic development.

We welcomed the successful outcome of the Somalia Partnership Forum in July, co-hosted by my Government, Somalia and the European Union, as it was an important opportunity to take stock of progress made and setting subsequent priorities. Active support from the international community for Somalia's development remains crucial. We commend the Federal Government's ambitious and successful economic reforms. Continued reforms are central for the overall State-building process in Somalia and for restoring trust in the Government. It is important that efforts now be geared towards the implementation of more demanding reforms.

We also commend the steps taken by the Government and the federal member states in security sector reform. The adopted transition plan needs to be swiftly and successfully implemented. To that end, strong commitment by Somali actors, as well as by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), its troop-contributing countries and other partners, will be vital. Improved coordination of international support will also be crucial. We need to acknowledge, however, that the build-up of security in Somalia will take time. We must therefore also continue to address the challenges to AMISOM's efforts, including by ensuring adequate, predictable and sustainable funding.

We commend the efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) to engage women and its efforts to increase their political

representation. The Executive Director's briefing shows how gender issues are central to peace and security in Somalia. The Council needs to stand with the Federal and state Governments in their efforts to advance gender equality. Dedicated support for women's participation is needed not just regarding elections, electoral reforms and the constitutional review process, but also for efforts to advance national and local reconciliation, prevent violent extremism and reform the security sector. In that regard, Sweden is working to create a women's network for mediation in Somalia. We commend the reporting on gender equality and women's empowerment in order to better follow up on those issues. We would welcome the use of gender-disaggregated data in future reports.

We also welcome the reporting with respect to climate-related security risks, as there is no doubt that they have a direct impact on the stability and security of the country. We look forward to receiving further information and risk analysis to that end. We also welcome the resilience and recovery framework launched by the Government at the Somalia Partnership Forum, which will help us be proactive instead of reactive in the face of climate-related threats.

In conclusion, I should like to thank once again Special Representative of the Secretary-General Michael Keating for his relentless engagement and valuable work with regard to Somalia's development. We welcome his reform of UNSOM and the introduction of the comprehensive approach to security, which paved the way for a more effective approach of the international communities' efforts in Somalia. We are also highly appreciative of the good cooperation that we have enjoyed with him and his staff in Somalia and wish him every success in his next assignment.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by thanking our briefers for their statements, and in particular by commending Mr. Michael Keating for his leadership, clear-mindedness and the perseverance he demonstrated as Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia for nearly three years. I also welcome the presence of the Executive Director of UN-Women at today's meeting. I join others in welcoming the new Permanent Representative of Ethiopia, Ambassador Taye Atske Selassie Amde.

The stability and security of Somalia remains a priority for France. We are all aware of what is at stake concerning regional security and, more broadly, successfully combating terrorism at the international level. In that context, France attaches particular importance to the gradual transition of the country's security responsibility to the Somali security forces, which must be part of a clear and precise timetable and adhere to the national security architecture . At the high-level security meeting on Somalia in May, we welcomed the finalization of the transition plan of the Somali Federal Government. It is now essential that progress be made in the implementation of the plan in the pilot areas. We welcome the recent transfer of security responsibility for the Mogadishu stadium, which must enjoy the necessary security guarantees. Needless to say, the transition will succeed only if the national security architecture becomes a reality in Somalia. Its implementation must be stepped up, especially with regard to the various areas highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/800), including the integration of regional forces into national security forces, the delineation of responsibilities between the various federal and regional security services and defining the chain of command.

The second key element to ensuring the transition's success is the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which continues to play a primary role in Somalia's security, given the persistent threat posed by Al-Shabaab, and, in that regard, we pay tribute to the Mission's troop-contributing countries. We know that, in order for it to succeed, AMISOM must be reconfigured to support the Somali transition plan in accordance with the request of the Security Council via resolution 2431 (2018), adopted in July. Although the Council decided to postpone reducing the AMISOM troop ceiling until February 2019, continuing the gradual, organized and conditioned drawdown of AMISOM remains important. It is also essential to abide by the new deadlines pursuant to resolution 2431 (2018). I would mention in particular the AMISOM operational readiness assessment and the technical evaluation, which should review the status of the Mission's reconfiguration.

Clearly, AMISOM must continue to be supported throughout the transition. Nevertheless, France believe that the European Union can no longer continue to finance the bonuses of AMISOM soldiers alone. As the reports of the Special Envoys of the United Nations and the African Union on funding AMISOM point out, it is now essential that new partners contribute to financing the Mission. More generally, in keeping

with remarks made earlier, all partners in Somalia must improve coordination, as was underlined at the Somalia Partnership Forum held in Brussels in July.

The third, and most basic, key to success involves the country's political and economic integration and unification. Somalia must face up to major challenges, such as deepening federalism, the constitutional review, the holding of the 2020-2021 elections, based on the one-person-one model, and pursuing an economic reform agenda. In that regard, we welcomed the outcome of the meeting of the National Security Council held in Baidoa in June, which marked the resumption of discussions between the Somali Federal Government and the federal member states. We are, however, concerned about the communiqué issued on 8 September by the Presidents of the five federal member states announcing the suspension of talks with Mogadishu. We therefore call on all Somali actors to resume their dialogue around crucial issues as soon as possible, including devising the electoral model and sharing revenue generated by natural resources. We also call for the cessation of all outside interference in the internal affairs of Somalia.

Overall, concerning the political process, in keeping with what Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka said earlier, I should like to stress the importance that France attaches to greater women's participation. As we know, the full and effective participation of women in political processes is a prerequisite for ensuring lasting peace and reconciliation.

I thank Michael Keating for having pointed out that Somalia is an example of a situation of vulnerability to climate events. The Security Council must keep that reality in mind. With respect to that issue and to the participation of women, I agree with the suggestion made by the Permanent Representative of Sweden that it could be useful for the Council to have access to analytical datat on these conflict-related factors.

I conclude by welcoming recent regional developments, such as last week's signing of a cooperation agreement between Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the holding of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development summit yesterday, marked by the return of Eritrea and the consultations held upstream between the Djiboutian and Eritrean authorities. These developments open real prospects for the stabilization of the entire Horn of Africa and, we hope, for Somalia too.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China thanks the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, Mr. Keating; the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, Mr. Madeira; and the Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka, for their briefings.

Mr. Keating's term in office will soon come to an end. China highly commends him for his contributions.

China welcomes the new Permanent Representative of Ethiopia and commends the former Permanent Representative for his contributions.

Somalia is an important country in the Horn of Africa. In recent years, through the concerted efforts of the Somali Government, the African Union (AU), the United Nations and the international community, Somalia has made ongoing and positive progress in rebuilding the State. China supports the efforts of the Somali Federal Government to promote political reconciliation, restore the economy and improve livelihoods.

Relations among the States of the Horn of Africa — Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti and Somalia — have continuously improved of late, thereby creating sound conditions for regional peace, stability and development. China welcomes these developments.

In the meantime, Somalia faces many challenges to its political process and economic and social development. The threat posed by terrorism to regional security persists. Somalia has a long way to go in its rebuilding and development efforts. In that context, the United Nations and the international community should, based on the situation on the ground, support African States in their efforts to resolve African issues in African ways and assist Somalia in its State-rebuilding.

First, on the basis of respect for the leadership of the Somali Government, efforts should be pursued to assist it in advancing the implementation of its transition plan, with a focus on governance, justice, police and security sector capacity-building. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia should provide targeted assistance in these areas. Regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, should fully leverage their roles in leading good offices efforts and work with Somalia towards further progress in security and rebuilding.

Secondly, efforts should be maintained to support the Somali Government in its work to combat extremist anti-Government forces and terrorist organizations, and to assist the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in its enhanced efforts to implement its mandate. The United Nations and the international community should give positive consideration to providing stable, predictable and sustainable funding support to AMISOM and help the troop-contributing countries with capacity-building so as to crack down more effectively on terrorism and promote the peace and stability of Somalia and the surrounding regions.

Thirdly, it is important to further step up humanitarian assistance and support to social and economic development in Somalia in order to help the Somali Federal Government to rebuild the economy and improve the well-being of the people. After many years of war and turmoil, Somalia's economic and social development is lagging. There is much to be done to strengthen its agriculture, education, health-care and infrastructure sectors. The international community should enhance its support for Somalia's economic and social development with greater inputs so that the Somali people can enjoy better lives.

Peace, stability, development and revitalization of Africa are the long-term aspirations of the people of that continent and the common responsibility of the international community. Early this month, China successfully hosted the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. The Forum adopted two important outcome documents: the Beijing Declaration-Toward an Even Stronger China-Africa Community with a Shared Future, and the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Beijing Action Plan (2019-2021).

It also launched new measures to comprehensively deepen China-Africa cooperation, with eight major initiatives at the core. Both sides agree to strengthen peace and security cooperation. China decided to set up a China-Africa peace and security cooperation fund to support their cooperation in peace, security and the maintenance of peace and stability. As China's first funding mechanism for African peace and security, the fund will help to build an even more effective platform for their cooperation.

China will continue to follow the principle of sincerity, real results, amity, good faith and the pursuit of the greater good and shared interests in its cooperation with Africa, and to participate actively in the cause of Africa's peace and security so as to make its due contribution to the peace, stability and development of Africa.

Mr. Van Oosterom (Netherlands): I would like to thank Mr. Keating, Ambassador Madeira and Executive Director Mlambo-Ngcuka of UN-Women for their briefings. Their briefings clearly affirmed that Somalia remains volatile and that many challenges persist for its people, in particular for women and girls. I was especially touched by the information provided by UN-Women on that score.

To address the challenges faced by women and girls in Somalia, we need greater representation of women in political structures and processes. We feel very strongly that Somalia now has a clear window of opportunity to advance gender equality in the reform agenda, the constitutional review process and the preparations for the elections in 2020.

We welcome the progress made by the Federal Government of Somalia on economic, political and security sector reforms, but, according to the briefers, many risks remain. That includes violent extremism, armed conflicts, political instability and the possibility of further humanitarian crises. In that line, let me focus on three issues: first, the implementation of the transition plan; secondly, the need to address root causes; and thirdly, the protection of civilians.

On my first point, we urge the Federal Government and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to accelerate the implementation of the transition plan. The next months will be key; success depends on the efforts and cooperation of all stakeholders involved — the efforts first and foremost of the Somali's themselves and AMISOM, but also of the international community in providing support. In that light, we welcome the winds of change in the Horn of Africa. We applaud the recent joint commitment of Eritrea and Somalia to restoring diplomatic relations.

That brings me to my second point. It is essential that the root causes of the conflict be addressed if we are to achieve sustainable peace. A stronger rule of law is key to addressing such root causes as corruption and impunity. Reforming the Somali security forces, on the one hand, is essential for the eventual phasing out of AMISOM; on the other, it will be effective only within a strong justice framework. The Federal Government of Somalia should show real progress. That includes

implementing the agreements concluded earlier on the constitutional review, federalization and the reform of the justice chain.

We remain concerned about the impact of climate change and ecological changes on the stability of Somalia. We underline the point just made by our Swedish colleague. In resolution 2408 (2018), the Security Council emphasized the need for risk assessments and strategies relating to these factors. We call on the United Nations and the Federal Government of Somalia to make progress on this, and we look forward to the new report of the Secretary-General, which should include reporting on those issues.

That brings me to my third point, concerning the protection of civilians. We are truly concerned about the heavy toll that the conflict continues to exact on civilians. We remain concerned about the scale of sexual abuse and assaults on women and young girls. Gender-based violence remains a key protection concern, especially for internally displaced persons, who are already extremely vulnerable.

We want to express our great appreciation to the national and international troops in Somalia. At the same time, we call on the Government of Somalia and its international partners to do everything possible to prevent civilian casualties during operations. In addition, it is crucial to ensure that the Federal Government of Somalia holds perpetrators of sexual violence accountable. In that connection, we welcome the approval of the sexual offences bill and hope that it will soon be enacted at the federal level. Let me stress that accountability is key to a stable political future.

In conclusion, we commend the Federal Government of Somalia for promoting a positive reform agenda. Although progress is being made, the scale of the challenges facing Somalia remains daunting. Failure to address any of them may have a knock-on effect on the others, and it is therefore crucial that all stakeholders work together in a coordinated way. The Kingdom of the Netherlands will continue to support Somalia on the road to stability.

Finally, let me reiterate our appreciation to Special Representative Keating, who will pass the torch at the end of the month. We want to thank him for his tireless commitment, persistence and leadership. We admire his courage, especially in these difficult conditions. We wish him all the best in his future endeavours, and we welcome the appointment of Nicholas Haysom as the new Special Representative.

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): We thank Mr. Michael Keating, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his dedicated service, and wish him all the best in his future endeavours. I am glad to once again see Mr. Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, with whom we met in Mogadishu during the visit to Somalia of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea. We also appreciate the very insightful and informative briefing of Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the Executive Director of UN-Women. Lastly, we welcome Mr. Abukar Dahir Osman, the Permanent Representative of Somalia, to the Chamber.

I would first like to express my condolences for the terrorist attack by Al-Shabaab in Mogadishu on 2 September, which killed a number of people, including children. That cowardly act of violence reminds us of the fragility of the security situation in the country and the need to make every effort to preserve its hard-earned stability.

We welcome the recent positive momentum in the Horn of Africa as we witness the historic rapprochement among the countries of the region, led by the strong political will for change displayed by Ethiopia's new leader, and we commend the political leadership of the region for initiating and promoting these positive changes with the goal of steering their nations towards a long-awaited peaceful and prosperous future.

On the political front, we note the progress made by the Government of Somalia in revitalizing the high-level political dialogue with the federal states, strengthening reconciliation processes and State authority across the country. In that context, we welcome the significant outcomes of the National Security Council meeting held in Baidoa in June, which reached key agreements on the transition plan, revenue-sharing and the electoral model for the 2020 one-person, one-vote elections. We commend and wholeheartedly back the bold and comprehensive reform agenda and development vision of President Farmajo and Prime Minister Khayre, and expect to see them consistently implemented. We also support the initiative to create an inclusive electoral system with the participation of women, representatives of the whole of civil society and national minorities. There can be no question that women must

be empowered to make a dynamic contribution to the peace process and given a lead role in decision-making and mobilizing the grass roots for community action.

Building consensus on those and other critical issues is important as a basis for further progress, including the conclusion of the constitutional review process and the definition of Somalia's federal model. We encourage the country's political leaders to overcome their differences in a constructive and mutually beneficial manner in the interest of the stability and sustainable development of Somalia. We also welcome the measures taken by federal constitutional bodies to ensure the holding of a national constitutional convention and provide an opportunity for an inclusive, Somali-owned review process.

Furthermore, we would like to stress the importance of the sustained and coordinated support of the international community for the recovery and stabilization process in Somalia. In that regard, the Somalia partnership forum held in Brussels on 16 and 17 July was an important step towards the further development of an international partnership to facilitate the implementation of the transition plan and strengthen Somalia's resilience in the face of humanitarian shocks and catastrophes.

On the security front, we are concerned about the persistent threats posed by Al-Shabaab and groups with alleged ties to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. We condemn all acts of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, that undermine the fragile security and humanitarian situation and the peacebuilding process.

We acknowledge the role of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and commend AMISOM and the various United Nations entities for their dedication to the security of Somalia. The swift implementation of the national security architecture and the transition plan, with the coordinated support of the international partners, will be critical.

At the same time, the transfer of responsibilities from AMISOM to the national security forces should not create a security vacuum. The continued capacity-building of the Somali National Army is essential for greater effectiveness. We note with satisfaction the efforts of the Government of Somalia in addressing the issue of the proliferation of arms and demonstrating a commitment to building its weapons and ammunition management capabilities. Just two days ago, we were briefed via video-teleconference by a national security adviser to the Sanctions Committee on the status of the issue, and we will continue to closely monitor the process, since it has critical significance for the country's security and stability.

On the humanitarian front, we call on the international community to fill the gap in funding the Somalia Humanitarian Response Plan in order to address the issues of vulnerable internally displaced people and broad climate-related consequences. Kazakhstan, for its part, has been contributing to the Plan's implementation by helping to alleviate drought in hard-hit areas.

Finally, we would like to stress the importance of ensuring Somalia's rapid economic recovery. In that regard, we encourage the Government of Somalia to take further concrete steps to implement fiscal reforms, build institutions and improve economic performance. We call on the international community to enhance its support for the further development of Somalia and for addressing the root causes of the crisis.

Mrs. Mele Colifa (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to echo previous speakers in welcoming the new Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the Security Council. We are grateful for the detailed and informative briefings by Mr. Michael Keating, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, Mr. Francisco Caetano Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, and Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the Executive Director of UN-Women.

At the outset, I want to express my delegation's dismay over Monday's attacks by the Islamist group Al-Shabaab on a Government building in Mogadishu, which resulted in six deaths and more than a dozen wounded. We would like to convey our condolences to the Somali Government and to the affected families.

Despite some progress on the ground as a result of the security measures taken by the Federal Government of Somalia and the ongoing efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and the African Union Mission in Somalia, the security situation in Mogadishu continues to be worrying. We condemn Al-Shabaab and other terrorist groups, which continue to be the primary threat to peace and security in Somalia. They are maintaining a presence in central and southern Somalia despite the measures that have been taken.

Our Government believes that the peace and security of States must be given top priority and attention in the United Nations because if there is no peace, there can be no development, and if there is no development, it is difficult to ensure people's dignity, integrity and freedom. We therefore fully support the eradication of terrorist activities, which are the main obstacle to Somalia's development.

However, it is also clear that the security dimension is not the only issue we need to address. The Government of Somalia needs the determined support of the international community to address the root causes of radicalization, such as poverty, lack of education and employment opportunities, and violent extremism. In that regard, we want to underline the importance of the support of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia to the inclusive political process led by the Government of Somalia, including the provision by the United Nations of its good offices in support of all the issues envisaged in resolution 2408 (2018).

We are concerned about last Saturday's decision by the leadership of some federal member states to temporarily sever their relations with the Federal Government. We believe that this decision will increase the pressure on the country's already fragile political situation, especially within the Government. We welcome the Federal Government's announcement of its readiness to resolve any issues with the federated states in accordance with the Constitution. In that regard, we call on the parties to resume dialogue in order to make further progress on key priorities, including power- and resource-sharing, the constitutional review, fiscal federalism, the preparations for elections in 2020 and 2021 according to the principle of one person, one vote, support for regional security forces and the completion of the federal model for justice and correctional institutions.

Lastly, my delegation is very concerned about the cases of sexual violence against internally displaced women and girls, whose situation makes them particularly vulnerable. It will be essential to improve the country's legal framework, its systems for the protection of human rights and the capacity and legitimacy of its institutions to help combat impunity, improve accountability for human rights violations and encourage reconciliation.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): At the outset, I would like to thank our briefers today for their very informative presentations. I particularly want to applaud Special Representative Michael Keating for his extremely hard work and continued efforts to support the peacebuilding and State-building agenda in Somalia over the past almost three years, and to wish him every success in his future endeavours. I would also like to congratulate Mr. Nicholas Haysom on his appointment as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia.

Poland welcomes the recent diplomatic developments in the Horn of Africa between Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Djibouti. We hope they can find peaceful solutions to their outstanding issues with a view to forging new, durable partnerships and economic cooperation that will benefit regional security and sustainable growth.

With regard to Somalia, Poland welcomes the progress that it has achieved so far, but we also note the fragility of the situation. We commend the Federal Government for setting an ambitious reforms agenda. We welcome the initial agreement on the electoral model, as well as the ongoing work on the electoral law. At the same time, we believe that there are other processes that have to move forward in parallel, in particular the federalization and finalization of the constitutional review that will allow for one-person, one-vote elections in 2020 and 2021.

We appreciate the commitment that the Federal Government of Somalia has demonstrated to economic reform, particularly its efforts to strengthen budgetary discipline and raise domestic revenue. Sustainable socioeconomic development is hard to achieve without taking concrete steps to combat corruption. In that regard, we see the anti-corruption campaign launched by the Government as a positive development.

The security situation remains critical to the success of Somalia's recovery and development efforts. Progress on security-sector reform, as well as on issues related to the political settlement, including power- and resource-sharing, is urgently needed and requires the concerted efforts of all actors. We therefore call on the Federal Government and Federal Parliament of Somalia, and the federal member states, to work together for the benefit of the people and in order to implement the national security architecture. We also call on the international community to support Somali efforts in a coordinated way. In that regard, we very much appreciated the recent Somalia partnership forum held in July by international partners, including the

European Union and Sweden, together with the Federal Government of Somalia.

Last but not least, I would like to emphasize the critical importance of political inclusiveness and ensuring women's genuine involvement in the political processes in Somalia. I could not agree more with today's briefer, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN-Women, that women in Somalia can play a vital role in peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts, forging resilience, addressing the root causes of crises and developing strategies to counter terrorism. The Council should build on the positive momentum that we are witnessing and support the Federal and state Governments' efforts to advance gender equality and promote women's political participation in Somalia. We also see a greater role for women in post-conflict reconstruction and economic recovery. In that regard, I want to thank all the United Nations institutions in Somalia for promoting civic education and gender equality and mobilizing young people. We especially commend the adoption of the United Nations-Somalia gender equality strategy.

I would like to conclude by thanking the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, the whole United Nations family and the African Union Mission in Somalia, as well as other actors present on the ground, for their daily efforts and their support to Somalia on its path towards peace and stability.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Michael Keating, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, for his valuable briefing and everything he has done for the Organization and Somalia during his years of service. I wish him every success in his future endeavours. I would also like to thank Mr. Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia, and Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the Executive Director of UN-Women.

I would like to address three aspects of today's topic — first, local developments; secondly, regional and international developments; and thirdly, terrorism and the security situation.

First, with regard to local developments, we welcome the improvement in the relationship among the various State institutions in Somalia, including official authorities, as well as the improvement in the relationship with the federal states. That steady improvement has prompted the League of Arab States to welcome several developments, including the success of national reconciliation and the support for Somalia's national development plan. That was expressed in a resolution adopted by the Arab League Summit in April that also welcomed the support for stability in Somalia and called on other Arab States to offer all possible support to the Somali Government. During the recent ministerial-level meeting of the Arab League held in Cairo two days ago, the current presidency of the Ministerial Council called on Arab States to support the elected Somali Government and make every effort to work with it to foster peace and development in Somalia.

We support the Somali Government's efforts to improve the economic situation in the light of the difficulties it is facing. We also want to remind the Council of the call that the Arab League has made to Arab organizations and funds to offer their support to the Somali Government in order to improve the situation throughout the country. We reiterate the call to the Security Council to maintain its united position in support of the sovereignty, stability and territorial integrity of Somalia while providing it with the financial and political support that it needs.

Secondly, with regard to regional and international developments, the positive events that we have been witnessing in the Horn of Africa represent great progress that will undoubtedly help to entrench peace and security in the region. We welcome the visits exchanged between the leaders of States in the Horn of Africa, including the visit by the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia to Asmara. We also welcomed the quadrilateral meeting held in Djibouti between the Foreign Ministers of Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Djibouti. These are all developments that will have positive effects not only in the countries in the Horn of Africa but in their neighbours as well.

The latest report of the Secretary-General on Somalia (S/2018/800) mentions some regional developments that are of concern, but because they are less worrying than formerly, we still feel cautiously optimistic. We also welcome the Somali partnership conference held in Brussels in July, in which Kuwait was a participant, designed to support Somalia's transition plan and national security architecture in preparation for holding elections by 2020.

Thirdly, with regard to terrorism and security, the repeated terrorist attacks on Somalia's capital, most recently on 2 September, are very worrying. We once again condemn such attacks in the strongest terms, as we condemn the terrorist group Al-Shabaab, which is responsible for these heinous acts. We commend the courageous role of the Somali National Army and the troops of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in confronting the dangers that Somalia is facing and protecting its people and institutions. We appreciate their sacrifice and pray for those who lost their lives.

We also welcome the current developments regarding AMISOM's handover of its responsibilities to the Somali National Army, in accordance with the recommendations of the operational readiness assessment. We also welcome the launch of the new policing model. At yesterday's Council meeting (see S/PV.8349), we heard from the Permanent Observer of the African Union (AU) to the effect that joint efforts on the part of the AU and the United Nations would offer more opportunities for strategic cooperation between the two organizations on the African continent.

In conclusion, we would like to once again thank Mr. Keating and to welcome his successor, Mr. Nicholas Haysom. We wish him success in his new position and look forward to working with him in order to help him succeed in his work and achieve greater stability in Somalia.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to thank today's briefers, Mr. Michael Keating, Special Representative of the SecretaryGeneral for Somalia, Mr. Francisco Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), and Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN-Women. We are also very pleased to see our new Ethiopian colleague in the Chamber today. We wish him every success and are ready to work closely with him in the Council.

We welcome the progress that has been made between Mogadishu and the federal states in restoring Somali statehood. In that context, we want to particularly highlight the progress made on constitutional reform, on developing a legislative framework for holding general elections in 2020 and 2021, and the signing of an agreement on the sharing of revenues from minerals.

At the same time, we urge all political players in Somalia to settle their differences exclusively by peaceful means. We note the mediation efforts that President Farmajo has made in that regard, as well as those of the Intergovernmental Organization for Development and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. Such efforts are particularly important considering that the challenges to security in Somalia remain very serious. The terrorist organizations Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant continue to conduct their subversive activities on Somali territory, and the Somali authorities still have much to do to put an end to such threats. Effective joint efforts are particularly needed for the work of building a national security architecture. The priority here is ensuring the transfer of responsibility for the country's security to the Somalis themselves. In that regard, we would particularly like to thank the African Union Mission in Somalia, which continues to make a huge contribution to normalizing life in Somalia. In the current circumstances, it is important not only to adapt the Mission to the changing situation on the ground but also to ensure that its reconfiguration goes hand in hand with the establishment of Somali law-enforcement structures. We are ready to discuss the modalities of financing AMISOM from the United Nations budget.

Progress in building the State and creating viable institutions of authority, especially on the social front, is no less important. The acute humanitarian challenges that the country is facing must be addressed as soon as possible. We support the calls to ensure women's active participation in that process.

The most recent developments in the region have made it possible to speak with hope for the future of the Horn of Africa. The positive momentum that began with the normalization of relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea has spread to the entire subcontinent. We believe that the steps taken by the States of the region, including Somalia, to restore good-neighbourly relations between their peoples will ultimately bring the stability and prosperity they desire. We wish the countries of the Horn of Africa every success along that path, and we are ready to support them in every possible way.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Michael Keating for his helpful work on the Somalia dossier for the past three years. We wish him success in all his new endeavours.

The President: I will now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United States.

I thank Special Representative Keating for his briefing and his dedicated work over the past three weeks to advance our shared goals in Somalia. I also thank Ambassador Madeira for his remarks, and I want to say a special thank-you to Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka for being here today and for her work in improving the lives of women.

Somalia finds itself at a defining moment. For the first time in more than two decades, it has a real opportunity to move towards protecting itself and securing its own country. That opportunity has not come without a price. The progress that we have seen towards peace and stability over the past 10 years is due in large part to the sacrifices of the countries contributing troops to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), as well as the contributions of international partners and donors. The United States honours and appreciates the sacrifices and investments that those countries have made, and we pay special tribute to the soldiers and family members of those who have been killed or injured while operating in Somalia.

For Somalia to capitalize on the opportunity of this moment, there must be progress in strengthening AMISOM's performance and accountability. There must be progress on the meaningful participation of women. We call on all partners to make progress in enforcing a zero-tolerance policy for sexual exploitation and abuse and, most importantly, progress towards transitioning responsibility for security to the Somali security forces. That can happen only through a smart, deliberate drawdown of AMISOM forces to reflect the conditions on the ground.

Progress on the political track is equally important in the coming months. Like the Secretary-General, the United States is concerned about tensions between federal member states and the Federal Government of Somalia. Such tensions threaten Somalia's hard-won progress. What is needed instead is the spirit of reconciliation. We call on Federal and state leadership to engage constructively and work to de-escalate these tensions. Furthermore, we need to see progress on the constitutional review process to lay the groundwork for universal elections in 2020 and 2021.

Something Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka said during her recent visit to Somalia should guide us. She said that a chance to improve a nation's Constitution is extremely rare — a once-in-a-generation opportunity. This is in fact a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve and lift up the lives of all Somalis. The country's leadership and all parties in the region must seize this opportunity. It is up to the Security Council to support that progress with AMISOM, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and the Government of Somalia.

A secure, inclusive and corruption-free Somalia is possible. Political and security challenges will occur; that is a given. But if we remain unified in our commitment to progress, I sincerely believe we will ultimately see a prosperous Somalia where all citizens can thrive in stability and freedom.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Somalia.

Mr. Osman (Somalia): I would like to warmly congratulate you, Madam President, on the accession of your country, the United States of America, to the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September. I wish you every success in your leadership.

I also wish to thank Mr. Keating, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union, and Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of the UN-Women, for their briefings. I also would not like to forget my brother, neighbour and colleague the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia, Mr. Amde, whose presence I welcome.

Since this is the last briefing of our good friend Mr. Keating as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), I would like to take this opportunity to thank him and acknowledge the important role he played in supporting major developments in Somalia over the past three years, including the electoral process, the development of the comprehensive approach to security strands to support the national security architecture and the transition plan, as well as in helping Somalia tackle the major humanitarian crisis caused by the drought. We wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

We also welcome the Secretary-General's appointment of Nicholas Haysom as his new Special Representative and Head of UNSOM. Mr. Haysom has our full support and we wish him every success in fulfilling his duties.

The delegation of Somalia takes note of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/800) commends the fact that it refers to progress made and acknowledges the positive steps taken by the Federal Government of Somalia. However, we respectfully suggest that in the future, in the interests of maximizing its usefulness, the report be redesigned to contain less narrative and detail about specific events and more in-depth analysis of major issues as well as recommendations and conclusions.

Over the past decade, we have come a long way in our joint efforts and have much to show for our progress in building our State institutions, ensuring essential services for our people, enabling democracy to take root and upholding the fundamental rights of all our citizens. The Federal Government of Somalia continues to believe that inclusive politics and legitimate governance are the basis for all other progress in Somalia. The path to achieving that vision is not always smooth, and in recent weeks the divergent opinions and views at various levels of Government in Somalia have been evident as we debate the future shape of our governance — the federalism structures — and how the responsibilities of different levels of Government will be allocated and resourced.

These are formative years for Somalia, and the emergence of new forms of Government is often a turbulent process. Many of the Council members seated here in the Chamber will recognize in their own histories similar disputes, disagreements, divergence of ideologies and of views, and vigorous debate that came to form the basis of their Governments and institutions. Somalia is no different. Like those members of the Council, we are committed to allowing those debates and differences to be energetically aired, allow time for solutions to emerge and provide the space for positions to move closer together. We recognize that can happen only through dialogue, which is why my President, Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo, has invited the federal member states to meet on 17 and 18 September to continue our debate and national discourse. We urge all federal member states to join us at the table to enable dialogue, not statements and press conferences, to be the basis on which we shape our relations.

Underlying this all, steady technical progress continues through the Federalization Negotiation Technical Committee, which is tasked with driving forward negotiations on the fundamental pillars for long-term stability, including the election model, resource-sharing and the allocation of powers, to support political agreements at the leadership level. We also held the Somali National Constitutional Convention in Mogadishu from 13 to 15 May, which set the tone and pace for the constitutionally mandated institutions to prioritize work, and set the timelines necessary for the completion of the constitutional review process.

On the security front, Al-Shabaab remains a vicious threat, able to conduct attacks against the Somali people, Government institutions and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). I take this opportunity to offer my prayers to the victims of the recent suicide attack on school and Government offices in Hodan district in the capital and to extend my heartfelt condolences to their families. Al-Shabaab must be defeated and neutralized as a matter of priority. In addition to significantly enhancing the efforts of Somali National Army and AMISOM, we suggest that the Security Council take urgent additional steps to cut off, forever, the means of Al-Shabaab's survival. We propose in particular that the Council authorize clear and adequate resources and time to enable the sanctions committee to ascertain definitively who finances Al-Shabaab, who provides them weapons and how those weapons and financial resources enter Somalia.

On our side, the Somali Government is working to address the primary tactic of using improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by developing a national counter-IED strategy, which will bring together Government departments to tackle the chain of events that allows for IEDs to be manufactured, transported, planted and detonated in Mogadishu and across the country, as well as the to work on the detection of devices and the prevention of casualties. That important capacity-building work will include customs, ports and law-enforcement agencies, as well as the development of policies and legislation and the strengthening of coordination and information exchange among security institutions and the relevant Government ministries.

This year we also embarked upon transition — an ambitious process whereby we Somalis are moving towards full Somali sovereignty, national ownership and leadership in an effort to realize our vision of a secure, democratic and prosperous nation. We continue with the implementation of the transition plan so as to enable Somalia to assume responsibility for security across the country, including the transfer of tasks from AMISOM to Somali security forces. In addition to our solid national resolve, the success of the transition

process will depend on the continued support of the international community, most importantly in building the capacity of our national security institutions. In parallel with the transition of security responsibilities, we are focused on doing what is necessary to implement the economic pillar of the transition process. That task will be more difficult, requiring more time and the sustained and long-term engagement of our international partners during and after the transition process.

We believe that economic recovery is the centrepiece of our Administration. We recognized early on that in order to carry out infrastructural improvements, institution-building and economic development, we needed debt relief and access to international financial institutions. We have therefore given our firm commitment to the successful implementation of the staff-monitored programme with the International Monetary Fund, which is now a strategic objective of our Government. Mobilizing domestic revenue is also a high priority, as we view sustainable and reliable domestic revenue as essential to reducing dependence on aid, boosting economic development and providing public services to our citizens, which for us is an important factor for sustaining security improvement.

As part of the fiscal consolidation programme, we are also in the process of reviewing security expenditures. The reforms we are currently undertaking include security-sector payroll reform, with biometric registration of all security personnel. We are keen to strengthen our systems through good governance. Fighting corruption and ensuring transparency are key priorities for my Government. There is a paradigm shift in that regard in Somalia. We are on a clear path of increased accountability and transparency, and have commenced some difficult reforms, aimed at transforming our nation, that demand accountability at all levels, federal and regional alike. The Federal Government of Somalia and our federal member states are expected to meet these standards of governance, and we are determined to support them in meeting those goals.

With regard to women's rights, the Somali Government remains fully committed to the promotion and achievement of equality for all its citizens and to women's empowerment. We commend the work of the United Nations specialized agencies in Somalia, which have supported us in improving the lives of young girls and women throughout our journey back from protracted civil strife. Historically, Somali women have played an important role in conflict resolution and are key to building sustainable peace in Somalia. Decades of conflict have increased the burdens placed on our women and girls, but our transition from conflict also presents more opportunities to advance Somali women's rights, in line with our Constitution and the relevant international laws. For example, our current constitutional review has the potential to significantly increase equality and women's empowerment, today and for generations to come. Our Ministry of Women and Human Rights is therefore taking the lead in bringing together prominent and strong Somali women at the first national Somali women's conference, to be held in Mogadishu in late October. The conference aims to advance women's meaningful participation in Somalia's constitutional review and their path towards the elections in 2020 and 2021, through a nationally led and owned process.

Somali women are very talented and we are proud of them. We would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Ms. Asli Hassan Abade, one of Africa's first fighter pilots, who has proudly served her country for decades. My Government's efforts will continue to be based on the principle of leaving no woman or girl behind.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the gratitude of the Government and the people of Somalia to the Secretary-General, his Special Representative in Somalia and all other troop- and police-contributing countries for the sacrifices they have made for a final and lasting peace in Somalia. I thank all our partners in the international community for standing beside us in solidarity to strengthen the foundations of peace, democracy and development that we have laid down. On the way forward, that role must be enhanced to strengthen Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We will continue along the path to realizing our common vision of a peaceful, stable and democratic Somalia that is self-reliant, a key factor in achieving peace and cooperation in the region for all time.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.